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Scientists turn to Shakespeare to unlock secrets of the inner mind

BY OUR HEALTH EDITOR,
Vienna, 5 November 1899

THE NEW FIELD of psychoanalysis is looking to Shakespeare's works to increase our understanding of the human mind.

A book published yesterday claims that great works of literature can provide valuable insights into the conscious and subconscious desires which are thought to contribute to mental instability.

This new branch of science called psychoanalysis is being pioneered by Dr Sigmund Freud, who is the author of the new book, called *The Interpretation of Dreams*. It aims to decipher people's subconscious dreams in a bid to better comprehend the workings of the mind.

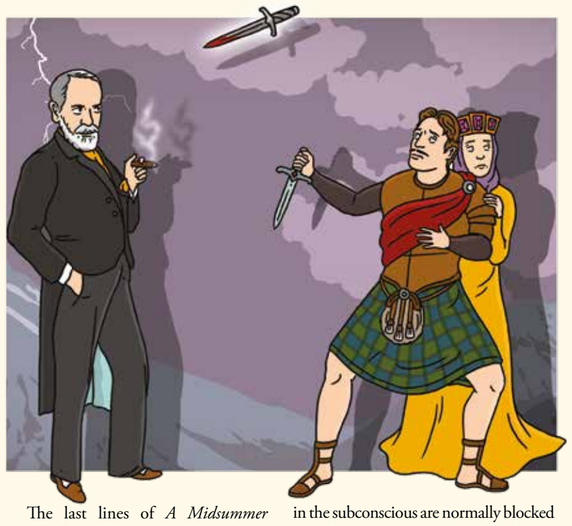
The proponents of psychoanalysis believe that the conflict between conscious and subconscious desires, which often stem from childhood, can lead to mental problems. But psychoanalysts believe that talking therapies or counselling, rather than medication or punishment, are the best way to treat their patients.

Dr Freud discusses various works of literature in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, arguing that they tap into universal psychological struggles. He sees Hamlet as repressing his darker desires. He also says that the Prince's doubt-stricken frame of mind, a theme central to his character, is caused by an inner struggle between his conscious and unconscious mind, leading to a total paralysis of action, immortalised in his words: "*to be or not to be, that is the question*".

According to Dr Freud, it is the unleashing of such repression through Hamlet's capacity for sudden rage-filled outbursts that leads to the deaths of many of the play's characters.

Scholars of Shakespeare have long been fascinated by his references to dreams. The playwright often harnesses supernatural forces to communicate or interact with mortal characters directly and indirectly, sometimes by means of omens and prophecies.

In *Macbeth*, a vision of a bloody dagger pointing towards the door of King Duncan's room in the middle of the night foreshadows the coming murder. Later, Macbeth finds his restless nights dominated by guilt-ridden dreams about the crime he has committed.



The last lines of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are delivered by Puck, who playfully suggests that the drama may only have been a dream – a figment of the audience's imagination.

According to Dr Freud, dreams are attempts by the subconscious mind to resolve internal conflicts. Unruly tensions in the subconscious are normally blocked out by conscious thought during wakefulness, he says, but in sleep tensions in the subconscious are able to surface. A deeper understanding of these tensions and conflicts can be gained, says Dr Freud, by tracing the appearance of dreams in culture.

Nazis claim Shakespeare as one of their own

ADOLF HITLER, the Chancellor of Nazi Germany, is reported to be such a fan of the works of William Shakespeare that he has lifted a ban on performances of his plays throughout the country despite the outbreak of war with Britain, *writes our correspondent from Munich in November 1939.*

According to German government sources, Herr Hitler ranks Shakespeare's works above those by Johann Goethe and Friedrich Schiller, both giants of German literature.

Shortly after Herr Hitler assumed power in 1933, an official Nazi Party propaganda publication appeared entitled *Shakespeare – A Germanic Writer*. This declared that the English playwright's works can be interpreted as supporting the Nazis' Aryan ideal.

However, following the outbreak of war in September this year, a theatre production of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* was postponed in the Kammerspiele, one of the two largest playhouses in Munich.



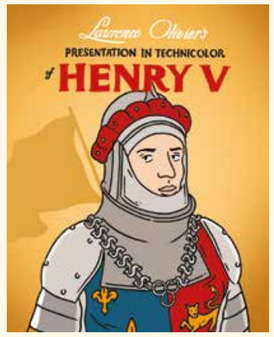
But the production has now been given approval to proceed two months later than its planned launch after the play's director appealed to Rainer Schlösser at the Ministry of Propaganda. Herr Schlösser has since said that Shakespeare is to be treated as a German author and has given permission for performances of his plays to be resumed.

Nazi ideologues claim that many of the heroic characters in Shakespeare's plays – from Coriolanus and Julius Caesar to Hamlet – represent the epitome of Germanic heroism, which puts the requirements of public service above individual needs.

Other plays such as *The Merchant of Venice* and *Othello* are being used by Nazi propagandists to reinforce racial stereotypes in a way that supports the intolerant regime. The attitude of the Jewish merchant Shylock, who demands a pound of flesh from his debtor Antonio, suits those who peddle the idea of German racial superiority.

Meanwhile, according to Nazi apologists, Othello's irrational fury at Desdemona underscores the emotional inferiority of non-whites.

Bananas and buses blight Olivier's Henry V



A BRAND-NEW adaptation of Shakespeare's play of heroic leadership, *Henry V*, starring Laurence Olivier, has been released in cinemas across Great Britain, *writes our film critic from London on 23 November 1944.*

The film, partly funded by the British government, has been dedicated by its makers to the commandos and airborne troops of Great Britain, "the spirit of whose ancestors it has been humbly attempted to recapture".

The release of the film coincides with the Allied push into Normandy and has received support from the Prime Minister. Mr Churchill believes Shakespeare's treatment of the British victory at Agincourt in 1415 should give a tremendous boost to the morale of the troops now fighting the Nazis. Various details from Shakespeare's original play have, however, been omitted, including the final scene that refers to Henry VI having eventually lost control of France.

The film, shot on location in County Wicklow in Ireland, has met with acclaim by critics and technicians alike due to its use of brilliant three-strip Technicolor, its fabulous costumes and the immensely powerful performance of Mr Olivier as King Henry V. The musical score, by British composer William Walton, famous for his epic choral cantata *Belshazzar's Feast*, has been equally acclaimed.

However, sharp-eyed viewers have spotted several bloopers that have crept in, such as the moment during a medieval battle when a motorised bus is seen passing down a distant country lane, and a market scene in which stall-holders are heard selling bananas – a fruit that was unavailable to those living in fifteenth-century England.

Despite such imperfections, the film critic James Agee has called it "one of the cinema's great works of art".

Stars crossed as West Side lovers take a tragic turn

BY OUR THEATRE CRITIC,
New York City, 27 September 1957

A MUSICAL SET in the troubled neighbourhood of New York's Upper West Side can be described as a modern interpretation of Shakespeare's famous tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*.

With a bold score by Leonard Bernstein and sparkling lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, *West Side Story* portrays the romance of Tony and Maria as they get caught up in a conflict between rival teenage gangs in New York. The musical opened to great acclaim yesterday at the Winter Garden Theatre on Broadway, one of New York's leading theatres. With all the romance, tension and explosive drama of its Shakespearean precursor, the musical has a plot which may make some uncomfortable.

Multiple elements have been lifted from Shakespeare's own tragic romance. New York City is the Verona of *Romeo and Juliet*, while Tony and Maria are its titular characters.

The feuding families have been replaced by rival gangs, the Jets and the Sharks, and in one scene Tony even serenades Maria at her bedroom window, and she then appears on her tenement fire escape, mirroring the night-time meeting of the lovers in *Romeo and Juliet*.



But *West Side Story* brings a new, updated dimension to this story of feuds and star-crossed lovers.

In Shakespeare's tale we hear little of the ancient grudge that exists between the Montagues and the Capulets, but in the musical the tension is ethnically motivated, between the Hispanic and white young Americans who belong to the two rival gangs. Unlike their Shakespearean counterparts, Tony and Maria are not from wealthy, powerful families, but like Romeo and Juliet they act quickly, perhaps irrationally, as they fall in love.

West Side Story continues a tradition of artistic works inspired by Shakespeare. These include novels such as Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, which takes its title from *The Tempest*, and *Cakes and Ale* by W. Somerset Maugham, inspired by a remark in *Twelfth Night.*

Shakespeare's new theatre company makes debut

THE FOUNDATION of the Royal Shakespeare Company was announced yesterday, promising bold productions of the Bard's plays along with works by contemporary playwrights, writes our correspondent on 21 March 1961.

The Company will take the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in the Bard's home town of Stratford-upon-Avon as its main performance venue. The theatre was originally opened in 1932 on the site of an earlier building also dedicated to Shakespeare. Conceived by Elisabeth Scott, it was one of the first major architectural works in Britain to be designed by a woman.

The idea for a permanent company of actors devoted to Shakespeare's works was first put forward by Charles Flower, who donated the site where the theatre now stands. Charles's father Edward, while mayor of Stratford, began the tradition of celebrating Shakespeare's birth in 1864, its three-hundredth anniversary. The nationwide programme of festivities included an entire week of Shakespeare's plays in Stratford. Initially the Flowers' efforts were met with derision from the theatre press who called them "respectable nobodies" owing to their lowly social status – they are local brewers.

Peter Hall is the Royal Shakespeare Company's first permanent director. Mr Hall, who has campaigned tirelessly for the establishment of a permanent Shakespeare acting company, became famous after directing the 1955 world premiere of Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot *at London's Arts Theatre.*

This year the Royal Shakespeare Company will be mounting productions of As You Like It *and* Othello *as well as Russian playwright Anton Chekhov's final work,* The Cherry Orchard.

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA

LOVE LETTERS

Proteus woos Julia with a romantic letter. Soon after they fall in love. Proteus travels to Milan to be with his friend Valentine, taking with him a ring that Julia has given him as a token of their never-ending love

"Sweet love, sweet lines, sweet life!" PROTEUS 1.3

WHO'S THERE?

When Proteus arrives in Milan he falls in love with Silvia, the same girl his friend Valentine already has an eye on. But Julia, disguised as a boy, has secretly followed Proteus and finds him trying to woo Silvia with the ring she gave him

"Love is blind" SPEED 2.1

FAIR PLAY

Valentine is furious that his friend Proteus has tried to steal Silvia away from him. Proteus meanwhile is shocked and ashamed to discover that Julia has been watching him all along. But in the end all is forgiven and the two couples celebrate by sharing the same wedding day

"One feast, one house, one mutual happiness" VALENTINE 5.4

BEST FRIENDS Valentine and Proteus, two gentlemen from Verona, are both in love with the same girl, Silvia, but Proteus already has a girlfriend called Julia who has given him her ring as a promise of their love. Ignoring his pledge to Julia, Proteus offers Silvia the ring, not knowing that Julia, dressed up as a boy, is spying on him. What does Julia think when she sees Proteus giving away her ring to another girl? And what will Valentine do to stop his best friend from winning Silvia's heart?

SHAKESPEARE'S THEATRE
STARRING • Proteus, Valentine, Julia, Silvia, Lance, Crab the dog
SETTING • Verona & Milan

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

EARLY DAYS

Petruchio travels to Padua to find a rich wife. When he comes to woo 'Kate the curst', he is determined to 'tame' her, but Kate has other plans and a vicious war of words breaks out between them

"If I be waspish, best beware my sting" KATE 2.1

BUDGE AN INCH

Petruchio declares that he will marry Kate. But Kate's wedding day is spoiled after Petruchio arrives late dressed in an outrageous costume that embarrasses her family. Petruchio drags Kate off to his country house before the wedding feast, saying he can do what he likes with her now that she is his property

"He that knows better how to tame a shrew, / Now let him speak" PETRUCHIO 4.1

TRUE LOVE

Petruchio 'tames' Kate into his idea of the perfect wife. At Bianca's wedding he wages a bet to prove that Kate has changed her ways. She shocks everyone by making a long speech telling other wives how to love and respect their husbands

"Why, there's a wench! Come on, and kiss me, Kate" PETRUCHIO 2.1

BIANCA and Kate are two young Italian sisters from a wealthy family. Lots of men wish to marry Bianca, but none of them are interested in the fiery, bad-tempered Kate, who has an unfortunate reputation for upsetting people. The girls' father Baptista insists that no one can marry Bianca until Kate has found a husband. When the young gold-digger Petruchio arrives on the scene, he doesn't care who he marries so long as his bride is rich, and thus he agrees to marry Kate in spite of her fearsome reputation. What will come of this explosive match? And will it all end with a kick or a kiss?

SHAKESPEARE'S THEATRE
STARRING • Kate, Petruchio, Bianca, Baptista, Lucentio
SETTING • Padua

TITUS ANDRONICUS

HARD-HEARTED

Tamora, Queen of the Goths, is captured by the conquering soldier Titus and brought back to Rome as his prisoner. Secretly she plans ways to take revenge on Titus and his family after he slaughters her eldest son in the street

FLESH AND BLOOD

In a reversal of fortune Titus and his family fall out of favour with the new Emperor who suddenly marries Tamora. Two of Titus' sons are framed for murder and executed. His daughter Lavinia is attacked by Tamora's youngest sons, Chiron and Demetrius, who cut out her tongue and cut off her hands. Titus is tricked into cutting off his own hand. Now he is the one who seeks vengeance

"I'll find a day to massacre them all" TAMORA 1.1

"She hath no tongue to call, nor hands to wash" DEMETRIUS 2.4

SHIVERING SHOCKS

Titus gets his own back at a banquet where he serves up Tamora's sons baked into a pie, which she eats until she realises what, or rather who, is inside. Titus then murders Tamora before being killed himself at the hand of the dying Emperor

"Why, there they are, both baked in this pie" TITUS 5.3

TITUS is an old soldier who has won many battles for Rome. He returns from war against the Goths with their queen, Tamora, and her sons as prisoners of Rome. Deaf to her pleas for mercy, Titus sacrifices Tamora's eldest son to the gods. When the new Emperor, Saturninus, unexpectedly marries Tamora, she uses her powerful position as Empress to seek a bloody revenge on Titus. What terrible deeds does she have in mind? And how will Titus get his own back?

SHAKESPEARE'S THEATRE
STARRING • Titus, Tamora, Aaron, Lavinia, Marcus, Saturninus, Chiron, Demetrius
SETTING • Rome

HENRY VI (Part 1)

SHAKESPEARE'S THEATRE
STARRING • Henry VI, The Dauphin of France, Warwick, Gloucester, Suffolk, Joan of Arc, Talbot
SETTING • England & France

WHITE AS SNOW

Henry is troubled by news that some of his countrymen no longer want him to be their king. Those loyal to him show their support by wearing a red rose, whilst his challengers wear a white rose

"This brawl today... / Shall send, between the red rose and the white, / A thousand souls to death and deadly night" WARWICK 2.5

HORSE-BACK-BREAKER

King Henry is also distressed by news from across the Channel that a young girl called Joan is leading French soldiers to victory over the English

"Fight till the last gasp..." JOAN OF ARC 1.2

SORCERIES TERRIBLE

King Henry's soldiers manage to capture Joan and burn her at the stake as a witch, but back in England all is not well. The Earl of Suffolk has wooed a French nobleman's daughter, Margaret of Anjou, as the King's bride. Henry's lords disapprove of the match, especially since England stands to lose hard-won French territories in the bargain

"Break thou in pieces, and consume to ashes, / Thou foul accursed minister of hell!" YORK 5.4

WHEN Henry V dies his young son becomes king. Young Henry has only just received the crown when he is suddenly faced with big problems at home and abroad. In England some people believe that Henry is not the rightful king, and in France a young peasant girl called Joan of Arc is fighting to free the French territories won by Henry V from English rule. Will an inexperienced boy-king succeed in ruling over so many rebellious subjects, and will Joan be able to bewitch and defeat the forces of England?

HENRY VI (Part 2)

YIELD THE CROWN

The Duke of York, who through his ancestors has a claim to the throne, starts to plot the King's downfall. At court he schemes against the Lancastrian nobles, whilst among the commoners he stirs up a popular revolt against the King

"I'll make him yield the crown, / Whose bookish rule hath pulled fair England down" YORK 1.1

DANGEROUS DAYS

The revolt is led by a charismatic commoner called Jack Cade who gathers a riotous mob intent on storming London. His rebellion is eventually crushed, but the Duke of York sees that Henry's hold on power is weak

"The first thing we do let's kill all the lawyers" RIOTING BUTCHER 4.2

WRETCHED REIGN

The Duke of York and his two sons raise an army, and the war for the crown begins. The King and Queen flee the battlefield but are chased back to London by York's soldiers

"For yet may England curse my wretched reign" HENRY VI 4.9

KING HENRY VI'S marriage to Margaret of Anjou comes at the cost of handing over precious French lands painstakingly won by Henry V. The King's hold on power grows weaker as his nobles become frustrated and question his leadership. Richard, Duke of York, is plotting to seize the crown for himself, believing he has a legitimate claim to the throne. Secretly, York encourages crowds across the country to rebel against the King and call for a new leader. Will enough men support York in his bid to win the crown? Or will Henry win back his people's trust?

SHAKESPEARE'S THEATRE
STARRING • Henry VI, Gloucester, York, Jack Cade, Queen Margaret
SETTING • England

HENRY VI (Part 3)

OFF WITH HIS HEAD!

Outraged at the Duke of York's attempt to seize the throne Queen Margaret defeats him in battle and then humiliates him by placing a paper crown on his head before killing him

"Off with the crown, and with the crown his head?" MARGARET 1.4

IN A PICKLE

The Duke of York's eldest son Edward wins a series of battles and is crowned king, but Henry's supporters are not happy. While his soldiers fight, Henry sits on top of a molehill and wishes he could enjoy the peaceful life of a shepherd

"O God! Methinks it were a happy life, / To be no better than a homely swain, / To sit upon a hill, as I do now" HENRY VI 2.5

DEAD AS A DOORNAIL

Henry is imprisoned in the Tower of London, and his young son is murdered when Edward's forces defeat Margaret's army. Edward's younger brother, the hunchback Richard, kills Henry in the Tower as the first step in his plot to gain the crown for himself

"I'll make my heaven to dream upon the crown" RICHARD OF GLOUCESTER 3.2

RICHARD, Duke of York, enters the King's chamber and sits on the throne, claiming it for himself and his heirs. King Henry arrives, but instead of fighting, agrees to York's bargain that he may keep the crown until he dies but on his death York will be made King. Queen Margaret is furious that the crown will not pass to her son and assembles an army to challenge York. Meanwhile York's ambitious sons persuade him to break the bargain immediately and wage war for the crown. Who will win the throne of England?

SHAKESPEARE'S THEATRE
STARRING • York, Henry VI, Richard, Edward IV, Queen Margaret
SETTING • England

1590
William Shakespeare, aged 26, is husband to Anne Hathaway and father to three children, Susanna and twins Hamnet and Judith

Attempts by Queen Elizabeth to colonise the Americas are frustrated after a colony established at Roanoke Island, off the coast of Virginia, is abandoned

1591
Philip Sidney's epic poem *Arcadia*, set in ancient Greece, is published. Shakespeare borrows from it for the Gloucester subplot in *King Lear*

ARCADIA by Philip Sidney

1592
Shakespeare is referred to as an 'upstart crow' by playwright Robert Greene in the first recorded mention of Shakespeare's fame as a playwright

Construction of the Rialto Bridge across the Grand Canal in Venice is completed

1593
London's public playh are closed for more th year due to plague